

NINETY-SIXTH YEAR.

ST. LOUIS, MO., SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1903.

PRICE FIVE CENTS.

# JAMES L. BLAIR FALLS IN FAINT AFTER DEYING CHARGES MADE BY FORMER EMPLOYE, JAMES T. ROBERTS; DICK BROTHERS OF NEW YORK ARE OUT IN A STATEMENT.

## Collapse Comes After Replying to Question About Reports That He Is Shielding Another— Brands as Falsehoods Statements That He Embezzled Funds From Phila- delphia Bankers and the Blow Estate of St. Louis.

James L. Blair collapsed at his country home "Airdrie," near Kirkwood, yesterday evening, after making a lengthy and emphatic denial of the accusations against him in the statement of James T. Roberts.

Roberts, who was before the Grand Jury for five and one-half hours Friday, charged that Mr. Blair, while representing Dick Bros. & Co., lawyers and bankers of New York and Philadelphia, had, in the course of several years' dealings, misappropriated \$300,000, by forging deeds of trust, using false notarial seals and manipulating legitimate certificates of title.

Roberts also charged that Mr. Blair, as cotrustee of the estate of Henry T. Blow of St. Louis, had, by similar methods, misappropriated \$63,000.

Reports connecting Mr. Blair's name with dealings of this kind have been circulated industriously throughout the city for several weeks, and among a dozen or more persons details have been stated with persistence.

Roberts was at one time employed in Mr. Blair's office. Fifteen years ago, according to Mr. Blair, he was discharged. At various times since then he had access to Mr. Blair's office and, by his own statement, or confession, removed from Mr. Blair's safe papers which he afterwards used in attempting to substantiate the charges against Mr. Blair.

It was Roberts who claims to have first learned of the irregularities alleged. It was he who went to Philadelphia to report his discoveries to Dick Bros. & Co. He asked a "fee" for his services, and is said to have been reimbursed to some extent.

It was Roberts who told Edward S. Robert, cotrustee with Mr. Blair of the Blow estate, that the supposed real estate securities were in reality forgeries. In this instance he was accompanied by a young attorney, James D. Shinn, and in this instance, also, Roberts is said to have demanded a fee for his information, or service.

Although, according to Mr. Blair, the latter had frequently befriended Roberts; had helped to lift a mortgage on his home; had gone on his bond when Roberts was arrested for killing Roy Simpson, a dancing teacher several years ago; had loaned him money and in other ways gone to his assistance, Roberts sought an opportunity to bring against his benefactor charges of forgery and embezzlement.

Roberts offered to sell his charges to the public through the daily press prior to his appearance before the Grand Jury. His attorney also informed The Republic that he had "the whole story" and it could be verified. The Republic was cognizant of the information in its possession—information based on authority as reliable as that of Roberts and his attorney, who told the story that his client also prepared for sale. Roberts finally succeeded in driving a bargain, and yesterday, following his appearance before the Grand Jury, his "whole story" was printed.

Dick Bros. & Co. are reticent about their transactions with Mr. Blair. They do not accuse him. Neither do they commend Roberts for his work in the case.

Mr. Roberts, cotrustee with Mr. Blair in the Blow estate, says that he first heard of the charges on September 2, 1903. His information was only hearsay. At any rate, the deeds in his and Mr. Blair's trust were in a safe deposit box for the last five years, and if any crime was committed it was barred by the statute of limitations. He had no reason to question Mr. Blair's statement that he (Blair) was shielding another, as Mr. Blair had always borne a good reputation.

Mr. Blair makes minute denial of Roberts's statements, and makes counter charges against Roberts. The latter is to appear before the Grand Jury again to-morrow.

### STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS MAY NOT INCLUDE FIRST DEGREE FORGERY.

Well Informed Lawyers Believe That Illegally Duplicating Documents Pertaining to Transfer of Land Is an Offense That Will Be Regarded by the Supreme Court on the Same Basis as Second Degree Murder, So Far as a Punishment Is Concerned.

"Will the Grand Jury, if it finds the statements made by Roberts true, return an indictment in the Blair case?" was the question heard yesterday from all sources.

Lawyers, in discussing the case, at once referred to the statute of limitations and have found it a most interesting question.

Assistant Circuit Attorney Maroney, who is conducting the Grand Jury investigation, said:

"I do not care to discuss this case from any standpoint. I am simply doing my duty as I see it under the oath of office that I have taken."

"As to the statute of limitations in this case, I have nothing to say, except that I have looked up the law, but not thoroughly."

An examination of Supreme Court opinions and the statutes on the law of limitations resulted yesterday in the discovery of this statement in the opinion in the Ellis case in the Seventy-fourth Missouri.

"There is no limitation to a prosecution for murder in either of the degrees."

It was also found that the statutes fix no maximum punishment for either forgery in the first degree or murder in the second degree. The minimum punishment is imprisonment in the penitentiary for ten years for both offenses. Forgery of deeds of trust or documents pertaining to the transfer of land, the statutes declare, is a first degree offense.

"Harvey, I am innocent of these charges and when the time comes I will prove it."

"I am the victim of another person's machinations, I am guilty of nothing."

"I shall prosecute any one who insists on tracing my good name."

The foregoing statements were made by James L. Blair, at the Baptist Sanitarium last Monday to Judge Thomas B. Harvey, Judge Harvey, in repeating them to The Republic last night, said:

"Mr. Blair, at the time I saw him, last Monday afternoon, had partially recovered from the shock he received at the Four Courts. He was perfectly calm and collected. My belief in his integrity will have to be shaken by far stronger statements than those of a man like James T. Roberts, who, by his own confession, robbed Mr. Blair's safe."

"Mr. Blair at that time expressed only one desire, and that was physical strength to combat his accusers."

"So far as Roberts is concerned, Blair may be guilty as Roberts charges, but he can never occupy so base and contemptible

"This," said one lawyer, "puts the two crimes on an equal basis. If there can be no limitation to the punishment of murder in the second degree, it may be found that this Supreme Court decision applies to forgery in the first degree as well. It will be an interesting question."

"Without the alleged forged instruments it would be hard to prove such a case. Witnesses cannot be forcibly brought from other States to testify in a criminal action. In a civil case it would be different. In the event of their refusal to appear in court in another State, depositions might be taken. Then if they denied all knowledge of the alleged transactions and the instruments could not be found, supposing, of course, that the other proof at hand was insufficient, there could be but one result to such a case."

"There is an opinion among lawyers that the statute of limitations does not apply where the law does not fix a maximum punishment. The Ellis case was one of this kind. The Supreme Court held that in that case the statute of limitations did not act as a bar to the prosecution."

"Whether this opinion would be held as good law by the Supreme Court in cases like this, supposing, of course, that the statements of Roberts are true, will make an interesting point to lawyers. If the case should come before the State's highest tribunal for settlement."

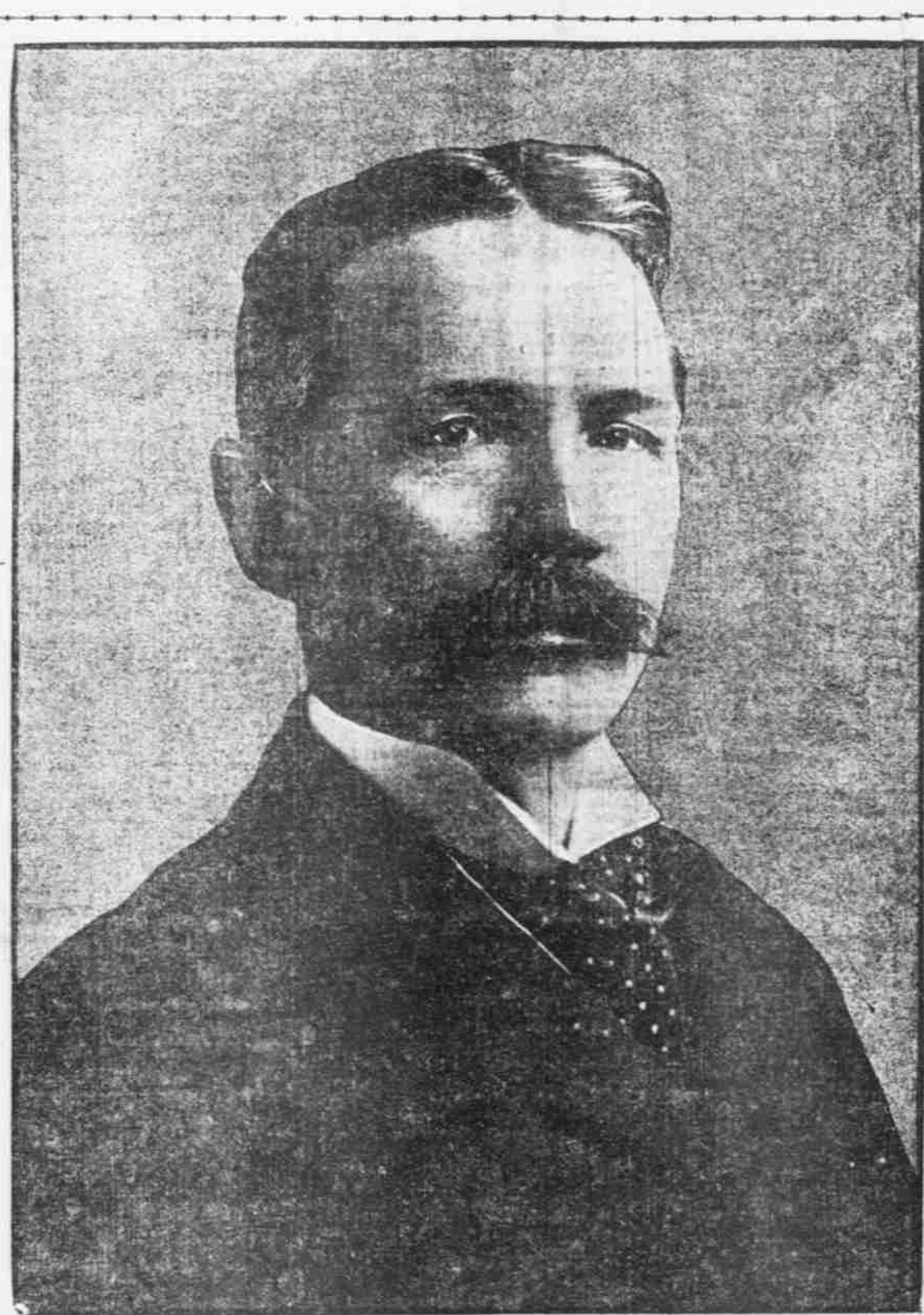
"If it holds good in one case, I do not see why it should not apply to all others."

### BELIEVES BLAIR'S REPUTATION REFUTES ROBERTS'S CHARGES

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JAMES LAWRENCE BLAIR.

—PHOTOGRAPHED BY STRAUSS.

### DISTRICT ATTORNEY GEORGE S. GRAHAM HINTS AT AN ATTEMPT AT BLACKMAIL.

a position in the eyes of the public as Roberts does by his own confession. I know both from Judge Sedden and Blair how much Roberts owes to Blair's charity and kindness."

"When I talked with Mr. Blair, I never saw a man who seemed more indignant. If he is guilty all I have to say is that he is the best actor I ever met. I certainly will not believe that he is guilty until I have something more tangible than Roberts's statements."

"All of his proceedings, his family history, the unbounded confidence which he has established in this community, gives the lie to these charges. When a man's lifelong career has carried a reputation of this character, it ought to stand him in good stead at a time like this. Proof of the most convincing character should, in my opinion, be demanded before such confidence should be destroyed."

"Inheriting many of the qualities of his illustrious father, a natural leader of men, held in his defense of the right, the commission of such crimes seems inconsistent with the record of his life."

### FLEE FROM TEXAS BY THE TRAINLOAD.

REPUBLIC SPECIAL.  
Denison, Tex., Oct. 24.—A special train with yellow fever refugees from San Antonio, passed through Denison this afternoon. There were about 200 yellow fever refugees, who reside in St. Louis, Chicago and other eastern cities.

None of the crew or passengers left the train while the latter was passing through Texas. The doors and windows of the cars were tightly closed. A guard accompanied the special to see that the passengers did not violate their agreement not to leave the train at any point in Texas.

EL PASO INVITES REFUGEES.  
El Paso, Tex., Oct. 24.—The Board of Health of El Paso invites the yellow fever refugees from San Antonio and elsewhere to come to this city, as the scourge cannot prevail here because of the altitude, it being 4,000 feet above the sea. The procedure is unique, but devoid of any dangerous consequences.

ALL TRAINS WATCHED.

REPUBLIC SPECIAL.  
Dallas, Tex., Oct. 24.—Dallas City and county health authorities were again in joint session to-day to consider the San

Antonio yellow fever and quarantine situation. Instructions were given to officers to watch all trains and see that no one from San Antonio or other infected States come to Dallas.

Governor Latham's State quarantine proclamation is being generally observed. Nearly 400 refugees passed through Dallas last night and to-day. They had tickets to places in the North, most of them going to the Indian Territory, as Governor Latham's proclamation prohibits the sale of tickets by railroads at San Antonio for any place in Texas.

THIRTEEN CASES REPORTED.  
REPUBLIC SPECIAL.  
Washington, Oct. 24.—Thirteen yellow fever cases at San Antonio have been reported to the Public Health and Hospital Service, according to the latest report. It is believed the spread of the disease can be prevented, and great precautions are being taken. One case is reported at Castorville, originating in San Antonio.

A dispatch from Eagle Pass says that Maverick County has quarantined against San Antonio on account of three deaths from the fever at San Antonio. The Government authorities are co-operating with the local health officers in breaking at Laredo. October 20 there were thirty-six new cases and two deaths. October 21, there were 400 new cases and four deaths. The work of disinfection is pushed energetically.

Medical Students Entertained.  
Medical students of the St. Louis University were entertained at the Central Branch, Y. M. C. A., last night. Two hundred and fifty were present. Miss Myers

gave a reading and Miss Priester played the piano.

CORONER NOT IN CONTEMPT.  
Court Discharges Funkhouser and His Legal Adviser.

Circuit Judge Hough yesterday discharged Coroner Funkhouser and his legal adviser, George S. Johnson, of a charge of contempt of court, because of the Coroner's failure to obey the order of court in the replevin suit of the Rio-Santo Grain and Securities Company for property belonging to the company which was seized at the instigation of the Grand Jury.

A motion by the Assistant Circuit Attorney to suspend the execution of the writ of replevin was certified to the Circuit Judges in general term. Sheriff Dickmann being one of the defendants in the replevin suit, the writ was given to the Coroner to serve. He made a return reciting that the property was in the hands of the court. The Rio-Santo Company made application to have him and his legal adviser cited for contempt of court.

Charitable Euchre Party.  
A euchre party will be given for the benefit of the Little Sisters of the Poor at Liebig's Hall, corner of Broadway and Greer avenue, on Monday afternoon, October 6. Play will start promptly at 4:30.

### STATEMENT FROM EVANS R. DICK, OF THE FIRM OF DICK BROS. & CO.

BY EVANS R. DICK OF DICK BROS. &amp; CO.

New York, Oct. 24.—"We have on the books of our firm no account with James L. Blair, nor have we any account between him and any of our clients, nor do I recollect that we ever had."

We have had interviews with J. T. Roberts. He tried to sell us information which he said had been obtained by picking the locks of Mr. Blair's office and desk. In the presence of our attorney, Mr. Cardoza, of Cardoza & Nathan, attorneys of this city, Mr. Roberts tried to bargain to that end by making statements concerning a possible loss that my firm would incur, that he should receive a percentage.

"Certain irregularities in the conduct of business were discovered and were adjusted, but no agreements between Roberts and my firm ever existed, and his actions have always been treated as dishonorable by me. What losses through judgment or otherwise my firm may have incurred were adjusted and wiped off our books practically two years ago."

"From the way Roberts has been hounding Mr. Blair, it looks to me as if some political or other motive is the basis of the attacks. Between Blair and my firm there is nothing that can in any way reflect on our standing—in fact no business exists, nor have any of our clients who invested money for years through Mr. Blair any claims direct or indirect on him."

### STORY OF HOW MR. BLAIR FAINTS AFTER HE HAD MADE HIS STATEMENT.

While standing on the south porch of his home, about 5 o'clock yesterday afternoon, James L. Blair, former general counsel of the World's Fair, suffered a total collapse and fell headlong down a flight of six steps.

His head struck the stone pavement with tremendous force and Mr. Blair was rendered unconscious. He was quickly removed to the house, where he remained in a stupor for two hours.

Mr. Blair had just finished a statement to The Republic and the reporter to whom the interview was dictated, was the only witness to the accident.

Mr. Blair stood for two hours and dictated an answer to the charges made by his accusers before the Grand Jury. His dramatic collapse occurred after he had answered an inquiry made by the reporter relative to the report that his alleged misconduct was the result of an effort to shield others who were to blame for wrongs that had been done in the handling of the Blow estate, as well as the transactions with Dick Bros. & Co., bankers, of New York.

In answer to this question, Mr. Blair said:

"I will not volunteer any information as to what may have been done in this particular. If, in defending myself, it should become necessary for me to disclose any such state of facts, that is a matter that I cannot avoid. But I wish it to be distinctly understood that I do not now make any such statement nor will I do so unless it should become absolutely and imperatively essential."

"Is that all you have to say to the public in regard to this report?"

**COLLAPSES BEFORE HE COULD ANSWER QUESTION.**

Mr. Blair attempted to answer. He seemed unable to speak. Of a sudden his face grew pallid, his eyes rolled upward, and he uttered a low cry. Then, in a most startling manner, he waived his arms wildly in the air and fell over.

During the interview Mr. Blair had stood with the aid of a scratch. His right leg, which he injured in a fall October 2, was still in bandages. The reporter had sat in a reclining chair about three feet from Mr. Blair. As the man fell the reporter attempted to catch him, but his efforts were in vain.

Mr. Blair's body went down with all force. As he lay on the pavement he seemed as if dead. His face was white, his eyes were closed and his lips were sealed. His body was limp and those who reached him first thought that life was extinct.

The noise of the fall attracted the attention of Percy Blair, Mr. Blair's son, who quickly ran to his father's assistance. When Percy Blair arrived on the scene the reporter had placed Mr. Blair in a sitting posture. Two other reporters who had been sitting on the west porch, ran to the scene, and with their assistance the body was carried into the house.

During the interview with The Republic reporter, Mrs. Blair had remained in her room. Hearing her son run from the house, Mrs. Blair ran downstairs. She met the reporters carrying her husband just as the party had reached the first landing of the stairway in the Blair mansion.

Mrs. Blair grew hysterical and the entreaties of her son failed to pacify her.

"Oh, they will kill him, they will kill him," sobbed Mrs. Blair. Mrs. Blair buried her face in her son's arms and sobbed most pitifully. "They may kill papa. But I'll live, I'll live," she cried.

The servants prepared a bed for Mr. Blair and he was taken to his room. Doctor H. C. Weyer of Kirkwood was called, but it was thirty minutes before he arrived. In the meantime members of the family, the servants and the reporters were making every effort to revive the stricken man. Mrs. Blair seemed unconcerned as she bent over her husband and tried to revive him.

"Speak to me, Larry, speak to me," she said, looking into the pallid countenance of Mr. Blair.

### ROBERTS MAKES DETAILED CHARGES AGAINST BLAIR.

James T. Roberts's charges against Mr. Blair, in substance, are: That \$300,000 was obtained on forged deeds and mortgages from Dick Bros. & Co., of Philadelphia.

That a shortage of \$63,000 existed in the Blow estate, which was the result of forgeries.

That false seals were used.

It was about December 1, 1903, that Roberts, according to his statement, entered James L. Blair's office. Roberts had just been admitted to the bar, and says